



NEWS RELEASE

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LANSING, October 4. In September, Michigan disbursed nearly \$21 million in federal energy funding to qualifying Michigan residents to help them catch up on their current heating bills or pay ahead for upcoming heating costs.

Three hundred thousand eligible Michigan residents received an energy draft or warrant through the Special Energy Allowance project to help them with their energy bills, the Michigan Public Service Commission, Michigan Family Independence Agency and Michigan Department of Treasury announced today. The federal Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) funded the one-time Special Energy Allowance project.

"Home heating costs comprise a significant portion of low-income residents' household budgets so we are very pleased that Michigan's low-income residents will see additional help in paying their energy bills," said Chairman Laura Chappelle. "We urge all recipients to use their Special Energy Allowance to pay off any outstanding heating bills or get a head start on heating bills for the upcoming season."

Customers with direct responsibility for their heating costs received an energy draft of \$80.00, while customers with indirect heating costs (heat included in their rent) received a \$40.00 warrant. The energy draft or warrant was sent to eligible tax-year 2000 Home Heating Credit recipients.

"Home heating costs are increasing and present an obstacle for the public assistance customer seeking self-sufficiency," said Douglas E. Howard, Family Independence Agency director. "This additional funding can help citizens better manage these costs." "With another Michigan winter just around the corner, we hope many Michigan consumers will rest easier knowing there's help available for their families," said Kathy Wilbur, Director of the Michigan Department of Consumer and Industry Services.

The MPSC is an agency within the Department of Consumer and Industry Services.

October 4, 2001 (Michigan releases \$21 million in federal Special Energy Allowance project)